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I have confined myself to this. It is to be hoped that it will be widely read and pondered ; for it is a powerful example of a movement of thought which must be reckoned with in modern theology.

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The Direct and Fundamental Proofs of the Christian Religion. By PROFESSOR GEORGE WILLIAM KNOX, D.D., Union Theological Seminary. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903. Pp. 196. \$1.25, *net*.

The title is an awkward one, but the author did not invent it. He borrowed it from Bishop Butler, for use in an age so unlike Butler's that the direct and fundamental proofs of the Christian Religion must be different from all that he called by that name. The first chapter is given to a presentation of the argument for Christianity that was current and classic when the old view of the world was still unbroken, and the second to an exposition of that modern view of the world in the presence of which the old argument has lost its force. It is for the new world that the book is written. The author then defines "reality" as correspondence with the order of facts, and "proof" as the establishment of such correspondence by practical testing, by the testimony of competent judges, and by the growth of general consent. Having thus prepared the way, he proceeds to define religion, and to show by what manner of proofs it must be established, in ethical life and in inward experience.

The proof of a religion consists in its adaptation to the most important needs of mankind ; and a chapter on the "Conflict of Religions" gives a most interesting illustration in the story of the judgment passed on Buddhism by the Chinese mind, showing how Buddhism was rejected because it seemed to defeat higher human needs which Confucianism better served. Next comes the definition of the Christian religion :

The love of God to man, the love of man to God, and the love of man to man, belong to all forms of our religion, as all forms of Buddhism proclaim the transitoriness of the world, and as every school of Confucianism teaches the principles of order embodied in a social code.

The love that is thus characteristic of Christianity is a love free and undeserved from God to man, a love grateful and obedient from man to God, and a love unselfish, eager, and helpful from man to man. All these forms of love are seen and acknowledged as existing in Jesus Christ, and it is this connection of the religious ideal with him that

makes the religion Christian. Of such a religion the proof is in great part ethical, for it is a spirit animating life and conduct; and the experience of mankind proves, however selfishness and pride may object and civilization may claim to be furthered by the opposite temper, that this is the only sound and successful principle in ethics.

Christianity is next considered as a religion—a religion that neither consists in philosophy nor worships power, but a religion of righteousness—the religion of a God whose righteousness comes forth as grace to save, and inspires like grace in men; and this religion is shown to be the one that heals discords and enables men to live in purity, strength, and hope amid the evils and discouragements of the world. Finally, by comparison with other systems, Christianity is shown to be the absolute religion, or the religion that cannot be surpassed in its fulfilment of the functions of religion for humanity.

Such is the direct and fundamental proof of the Christian religion that is set over against the proof that Butler argued out—namely, miracles and prophecy commending a messenger sent from God, whose message we must then receive, believe, and obey, because it is thus authenticated. The difference is immense. Dr. Knox seeks proof of the religion itself, that is, of the message, in its intrinsic substance and effective power; and he seeks such proof as good judgment requires in other matters.

His discussion in this volume is brief and compact, but it is profoundly impressive and convincing. He has wrought out a proof of Christianity within the field of Christianity itself, that is, within the field of ethics and religion. This proof is not independent of the gospel history, but it is independent of many perplexing questions that arise concerning that history. It does not reject testimony from the field of nature and science, but it would keep such testimony in its place; and it moves entirely within the realm of life and the spirit, and establishes the validity of the Christian realities in the region where alone they can be adequately estimated. It places the emphasis where emphasis belongs, and seeks to prove religion where religion can be proved. Dr. Knox has performed a good service for the modern world in giving it so helpful an argument for Christianity as an element in its intellectual, practical, and religious life. The book deserves wide reading, and is especially to be commended to ministers, and to all who have occasion to help others in the realm of Christian faith.

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